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[Discover Whitewater](#)

[ABOUT](#)
[HOW WE WORK](#)
[WAT COMMUNITIES](#)
[RESOURCES](#)
[NEWS & STORIES](#)
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Why Whitewater Stands Out

The City of Whitewater is creating a culture that supports opportunities to walk, bike and be active, thanks to a broad coalition of residents and local leaders in the community. In 2013, Whitewater established a bicycle and pedestrian master plan with a vision for a connected network linking people and places throughout the city. They've made progress, thanks in part to the adoption of a Complete Streets ordinance in 2015, a wayfinding signage plan in 2016, and ongoing efforts to improve parks across the city. These policies will gradually enhance the existing network of 11 parks and over 13 miles of trails. A recent update of Starin Park, for example, added new outdoor adult fitness equipment, which has been heavily used due to the park's central location in proximity to university students, senior housing, and family residences. Additionally, Whitewater encourages people to get outside and use these community assets through its many program offerings throughout the year.

Partnerships keep Whitewater moving forward. City staff and departments routinely collaborate to maximize the impact of their work. When the wayfinding signage plan ran into funding challenges, Whitewater's Parks and Public Works Departments realized they could include the signage into routine park and street improvement projects. Similarly, although Whitewater's Complete Streets ordinance is advisory rather than mandatory, it provides partners with a goal and helps them think the best use of resources when implementing Complete Streets designs in every project possible. Working for Whitewater's Wellness (W3) is another important partner. A local non-profit comprised of partners in health, business, non-profit, education and other sectors, the organization provides expertise and communicates from a health perspective. The city and W3 are key partners of the Discover Whitewater Series, a fun walk/run series, which has become a source of pride among residents of all ages and means to attract visitors.

A spirit of innovation and collective problem solving in Whitewater contributes to an optimistic sense of the future. After the city lost its only grocery store several years ago, a broad coalition of residents, businesses and local officials began working to establish a community owned grocery market. The city's bicycle and pedestrian plan will help ensure that the market, when built, will be accessible by walking and biking and will provide access to fresh, healthy



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Active Wisconsin

Search

ABOUT

HOW WE WORK

WAT COMMUNITIES

RESOURCES

NEWS & STORIES

JOIN

CONTACT

This includes UW-Whitewater and the Whitewater Unified School District. The community helped established a "Sunshine Fund" which subsidizes participation in recreation and program opportunities for those without the ability to pay.

Whitewater is also home to a growing Hispanic population, and a growing partnerships within the Latinx community uncovered an opportunity to make sure the wayfinding signs would appear in Spanish as well as English. There is interest among stakeholders in identifying more ways to directly involve people from minority groups in leadership roles. They are proud to be a part of and have the Wisconsin Active Together initiative as a resource and a network to advance health equity alongside active community strategies.

Strategy Action Snapshot

Local Action Strategies



- One-time Community building walks or rides (e.g., Slow Roll, Bike Rendezvous, etc.)
- Open Streets event(s)
- Regular weekly or monthly community building rides or walks
- Create simple community walking loops / trails with signage
- Installing bike racks and/or fix-it stations
- Place physical walking/biking route maps in the community

Planning to do:

- Create simple community walking loops / trails with signage
- Installing bike racks and/or fix-it stations
- Community Bike Share

Community Engagement Strategies



- Participatory public art
- Other, please specify: W3 will be implementing a marketing/awareness campaign through email and social media in 2019 to highlight Whitewater's accomplishments and opportunities to be more physically active

Community Impact



- Adopt a Bike/Ped Plan
- Establish consistent Wayfinding Signage
- Local Complete Streets policy

Planning to do:

- Establish consistent Wayfinding Signage

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ABOUT

HOW WE WORK

WAT COMMUNITIES

RESOURCES

NEWS & STORIES

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